

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 and 6-46 are pending in the application.

Claims 20-39 stand withdrawn from consideration by way of the earlier-filed election. Claims 20-39 have been canceled without prejudice herein to facilitate early allowance of this application. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute the withdrawn and canceled claims 20-39 at a later date by way of a divisional application.

Claims 1-4, 6-8, 10-12, 14, 15 and 17-19 stand allowed.

Claims 9, 13, 16 and 40-46 stand rejected.

Claims 9, 40-42 and 45-46 stand objected to under 37 C.F.R. §1.75(c) as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. The Examiner states that claim 9 appears to replace limitations in parent claim 4. The Examiner goes on to state that "parent claim 4 recites that the plurality of take-up reels are attached to an **identical** take-up shaft in parallel. Claim 9 recites the take-up reels are attached to the **separate** take-up shafts." [Emphasis in original]. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner based on the fact that claim 4 recites a take-up device for simultaneously taking up the film carrier tapes "...upon a plurality of take-up reels attached to separate take-up shafts in parallel...". [Emphasis supplied] Hence, parent claim 4 recites that the take-up reels are attached to separate take-up shafts in parallel, while dependent claim 9, likewise, recites that the take-up reels are attached to the separate take-up shafts. Hence, claim 9, conforms with its base claim 4. Removal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 40, 41, 42 and 45 have been canceled herein and, accordingly, the objection under 37 C.F.R. §1.75(c) is moot in view of the cancellation of these claims.

With respect to the objection of claim 46 as being dependent upon a canceled claim, namely claim 5, claim 46 has been amended herein to now depend from claim 1. Accordingly, the objection under 37 C.F.R. §1.75(c) has been overcome.

Claims 9, 13, 16 and 40-46 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and

distinctively claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. With respect to claim 9, the Examiner states that it appears to negate the previous limitations of the base claim 4. This rejection appears to be based upon the same grounds as discussed above with respect to the objection under 37 C.F.R. §1.75(c) wherein the Examiner mischaracterized parent claim 4 as reciting a plurality of take-up reels attached to an **identical** take-up shaft. As pointed out above, parent claim 4 recites that the take-up reels are attached to **separate** take-up shafts in parallel. Claim 9 has, however, been amended to change the phrase "a plurality of take-up reels" to read --**the** plurality of take-up reels-- so as to clarify that the take-up reels further defined in claim 9 are the same take-up reels recited in base claim 4. It is believed that claim 9 is now in condition for allowance, and the Examiner's reconsideration is requested.

With respect to claim 13, the Examiner states that it appears applicant intended to make claim 13 dependent on claim 12 rather than claim 2. Applicant agrees with the Examiner's position and has accordingly amended claim 13 to depend from claim 12. Claim 13 is now in condition for allowance.

With respect to claim 16, it is obvious, due to a typographical oversight in the earlier-filed amendment, that reference to claim 1 in the dependency portion of line 2 thereof, which read "according to claim 1 claim 4", should properly read --according to claim 4--. Claim 16 has been amended to clarify that the claim depends from claim 4. Claim 16 is now deemed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 40, 41, 42, 44 and 45 have been canceled herein and, accordingly, the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. §112 is moot.

With respect to claim 43, the Examiner has taken the position that there is improper antecedent basis for the limitation "a drive gear" in this claim. Base claim 2, according to the Examiner, also recites "a drive gear", "a side guide portion", and "an adjacent part guide portion" and, according to the Examiner, it is unclear whether the elements in claim 43 are new or different elements. Claim 43 has been amended herein to further define additional features of the drive gear not present in base claim 2 to include a both end gear mated with a sprocket hole, etc., and an intermediate gear. In addition, there is no recitation in claim 43 of "a side guide

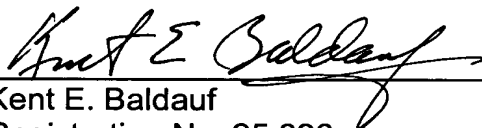
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- Attorney Docket No. 1217-040374

portion" or "an adjacent part guide portion" as opined by the Examiner. Reconsideration of claim 43 is respectfully requested.

Finally, with respect to claim 46, the dependency of claim 46 has been changed from "claim 5" to --claim 1--. Claim 46 now properly depends from an allowed base claim and is, likewise, in condition for allowance.

The Examiner's considerable efforts in reviewing the instant claims and suggesting changes and noting allowance of the various claims is appreciated. The Examiner's reconsideration and formal allowance of claims 1-4, 6-19, 43 and 46 are respectfully requested in light of the amendments and remarks set forth above.

Respectfully submitted,
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